

As For Myself - TO TRAINS

Looking at the new "title drawing" which my buddy, Emil Zunker, made for my column, I've been muttering to myself: "how true!" That's just about it — sweating over the typewriter and trying to catch trains. How to be in Chicago Sunday and in Oklahoma City Monday morning April's schedule calls for a week in St. Louis, a week in Minneapolis, and a week in Oklahoma City, with each Sunday in between to be spent in Chicago. May will take me to Detroit and Buffalo. June to Denver and Utah and from there on farther and farther West.

Winter is at long last gone (I hope). Thanks be to God, I've been pretty well throughout the entire winter for the first time since I moved from Alabama. I'm either getting accustomed to the miserable Yankee winters, or else, the week in Alabama during the mid winter did the trick. Actually, and without any doubt, my well being is due to the prayers of my many wonderful friends.

We (the family) planned to spend Easter at my cousin's Ernie and Estelle's home in Dyer, Indiana. Easter, however, turned out to be the worst day of the entire winter in Chicago — weather that made traveling almost impossible — even for trains. So, Kazy, Lil, Nancy, Grandma and I landed at the home of Mom and Dad (aunt and uncle Urbutis) and enjoyed a real Lithuanian dinner with all the delicious trimmings. From there I went to see the Austrian concert which was worth braving any kind of a weather, had supper with the Engelhardt's and went home to stay put. Atmospherically Easter in Chicago was a disgusting day.

On Tuesday, April 11th, Larry Golden and myself left for St. Louis to participate and attend the National Folk Festival. The day was raw and awful. The car broke down twice and we were freezing. Tho we found St. Louis in new green with flowers in bloom and trees bursting with leaves, the weather was not much warmer than Chicago's; in fact, it snowed.

The National Folk Festival is always a highlight of the year for me. Seeing everyone once again is especially pleasant. It is also the busiest time for yours truly. Sessions in the morning, programs in the afternoon, and dancing until the wee hours of the next day — and the same thing all over again for the next four days.

This year the festival participation gave me an added merry chase when on the last day, just before we were to appear, I was informed that one key couple was unable to come down to St. Louis to participate. It meant the drafting of strangers and retraining the entire program. For the French group I drafted Al Geary from Denver and Mrs. Irene Hoffmeister from St. Louis. For the Court dances I drafted Frank Heck from Great Falls, Montana, and Emily Mucha, my pianist. Then, I drafted Dick Alrod from the Minnesota group to be the pianist. It certainly made the burden extremely heavy on me but I was most happy with the results. Both groups were well received and the Court Dances thrilled the spectators. I appreciate exceedingly the willingness of the drafted souls in entering into the situation like good troupers and sports and putting it over so excellently. It was a flawless performance. My Lithuanian group likewise got their share of acclaim for a good performance.

The Minnesota Group invited our Lithuanian and French group to share their feasting at the Balck Forest Bavarian eaterie. We ate and we danced and we had a

good time. The Minnesotans are certainly a good bunch and they put on grand demonstrations. After the evening program, which ended around 11:30, there were two more hours of general participative dancing; and still not having the fill, the Minnesotans and the Liths went to the Hotel hall and danced more till the wee hours of the morning.

The Meiers had me out in their lovely home in Webster Groves for a quick luncheon. Mrs. Proctor from Philadelphia, Mrs. Prominski from Chicago, and Ozarkian Mrs. McCord were the other guests. Mrs. McCord, enjoying the title of "the Queen of the Ozarks", is the jolliest person ever. I've laughed myself to tears at the many anecdotes she related in her clever and uninhibited manner. I sure had an unexpectedly good time. Mrs. Walter Hungerford from California is another of those grand buddies of mine who affords so much laughter and fun. She is very good company and a good egg even tho she threatens to serve me frog legs next time I visit their home.

Morry Gelman, president of the Minnesota Folk Dance Federation, drove me and Ann Sereika back to Chicago and we all came in time (a wee bit late) for the performance by the Ciurlionis group of Lithuanian folk singers and dancers held at the Civic Opera House. They put on an excellent show, and I was mighty proud of them. They are as good as any high class group now touring this country, perhaps even much more unusual.

I only had one day between St. Louis and Minneapolis in which day I slaved away to compile the balance of VILTIS, write up the folk festival, take care of accumulated mail, run to the printers and do an other million and two hundred thousand things. When you get this VILTIS I'll have been in Minnesota and Oklahoma. Right after my concert on May 14th I'll leave for Detroit and Buffalo, and after a week at home I'm leaving for four months for points west. Therefore, I can be sure of a... Pasimatysim. VYTS—FIN

CHICAGO'S BLOSSOM TIME MAY 12TH

When Chicago's crab apples and lilacs will be in full bloom, the Chicago Park District will celebrate. A huge program is planned on the Grant Park Plaza at Harrison and Michigan with a selection of a "Blossom Time" Queen and a program consisting of folk dances presented by various nationality groups.

PLAN FOR A FOLK DANCE VACATION IN COOL COLORADO

at

The 3rd Annual Rocky Mountain Folk Dance Camp
LOOKOUT MT'N, GOLDEN, COLO.

2 Dates: July 2-15 and July 16-29

3 dance sessions featuring daily:

Western Squares and Round Dances

Danish and English folk dances

Mixers, play-party games and folk dances of other lands

Folk singing, steak fries, scenic tours, dancing at the many nearby famed dance centers, and other features are also on the program.

Write PAUL J. KERMIET at above address for further information.

Among Our Friends

NICK ATHENS

Nick Athens, noted Chicago architect, closed his office and left for points South, Southwest and West. His first stop will be for a visit with his sister in New Mexico, from there to Old Mexico and Mexico City where he hopes to study some Mexican folk dances. He will eventually land in California. Hope to see you there. Meanwhile, Bon Voyage.

ETHEL TURNER O'BRYNE

San Francisco's Capezio lady, Ethel Turner O'Bryne, was one of those who was counted among the delegates who attended the Phys. Ed. convention in Dallas, Texas. In San Francisco, Miss Turner leads several folk dance groups.

MRS. LILLIAN TOTTEN

Fairhope's (Ala.) busy lady, Mrs. Lillian Totten (World Federalist and what have you and a "true blue" VILTITE too), was up in Chicago to see son Edward graduate from the University of Chicago with a "Masters" as a full fledged Geologist. Before returning to Fairhope with its azaleas, dogwoods in their glory and spring in its splendor, they stopped off in Louisville, Ky. for a brief visit with the Judson Grays. Mrs. Gray is the former Clara Totten, a daughter.

Wedding Bells

Beal — Geiger

The Morris Chapel on the College of the Pacific campus, in Stockton, Cal., will be the scene where the marriage of Les Geiger and Charlotte Ann Beal on June 18, 1950. Both are folk dancers and members of the "Polka-Y-Dots" dance group. Les was a staff member of the College of the Pacific folk dance camp during the past two years and will be on the staff this year too. He is the originator of three Adult Education dance classes in Linden, Stockton and Holt, resp., and is very active in the "Polka-Y-Dots." Lottie started her dancing with the 4-H, then she joined Les's Teen Age Group and finally the "Polka-Y-Dots", where couples get married — 19 weddings in two years. Watch for a new organization: "The Polka-Y-Tots," coming up in a few years. Our best wishes to Lottie and Les.

Ducate Pettee

Warren W. Pettee, a folk dance leader and National Folk Festival vet connected with the Sherwood Club of the Steele Center in Denver, Colo., was wed to another fellow folk dancer, Miss Viola Marie Ducate, on April 22nd. The wedding took place at the First Presbyterian Church of Denver. Our sincerest wishes to both of you.

Minsterman—Kaufmann

"Mr. and Mrs. Frank Minsterman, of Laurel St., Buffalo, N. Y. announce the engagement of their daughter Ruth Augustine to Frederick Hoover Kaufmann, son of Mr. and Mrs. Dale Kaufmann, of Summer St."

CHICAGO LITHS A HANDSOME BUNCH



Another young Chicago Lithuanian won the "Perfect Physical Fitness and Proportions" title. This time it is Al Brijunas. Bruno Markunas, a former "Mr. Chicago" was one of the judges who chose this year's "Mr. Chicago". In 1948, Alan Stepan-Steponaitis was selected as Mr. America. Al Brijunas will contend for the title of "Mr. America", likewise. We sure wish you good luck.

Above picture, taken by Cliff Oettinger, shows Teresa Giorgian, Miss Chicago (Italian), presenting the trophy to Al Brijunas, the new Mr. Chicago, during the contest held on February 26th at the 8th Street Theatre. Al won previously the title of Mr. YMCA and plans to participate in the Mr. America contest to be held during May in Philadelphia. He is a former Bridgeport and Marquette Park (Lithuanian localities in Chicago) lad, now living in the Englewood section with his wife Dorothy. He is unassuming and friendly. He speaks well Lithuanian and he is only 21. We sure wish him all the luck in the world.



"LET'S DANCE" — Monthly Magazine of the Folk Dance Federation of California: — Includes dance descriptions, calendar of events, folk dance news, pictures, cartoons, articles by folk and square dance leaders, record and book reviews, costume information, personality sketches, and other folk dance information.

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